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ELEGIA
SCRIPTA IN
COEMETERIO RUSTICO
A. THOMA GRAY
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LONDINI:

Proſtant venales apud J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXVIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30 62
MAR

E L E G I A

SCRIPTA IN

COEMETERIO RUSTICO.

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Ad POETAM.

NOS quoque per tumulos, et amica Silentia dulcis
Raptat Amor; Tecum liceat, Divine Poeta,
Ire ſimul, tacitàque lyram pulſare ſub umbrà.

Non tua ſecuros faſtidit Muſa Penates,
Non humiles habitare caſas, et ſordida Rura;
Quamvis radere iter liquidum ſuper ardua Cœli
Cœrula, Pindaricà non expalleſceret Alà.
Quòd ſi Te Latiæ numeros audire Camœnæ
Non piget, et noſtro vacat indulgere labori;
Fortè erit, ut vitreas recubans Anienis ad undas,
Te doceat reſonare nemus, Te flumina, Paſtor,
Et tua cæruleà diſcat Tiberinus in Urnà
Carmina, cum tumulos præterlabetur agreſtes.

Et cum pallentes inter numeraberis Umbras,
Cum neque Te vocale melos, neque dulcis amici
Colloquium, neque naturæ mirabilis ordo,
Ex humili poterunt iterum revocare cubili;
Quamvis nulla tuum decorent Inſignia Buſtum,
At pia Muſa ſuper, noſtræ nihil indiga Laudis,
Perpetuas aget excubias, lacrymàque perenni
Nutriet ambroſios in odoro Ceſpite flores.

C. A. et W. H. R.

AN

ELEGY, &c.

THE Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind ſlowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkneſs and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landſcape on the ſight,
And all the air a ſolemn ſtillneſs holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his drony flight,
And drowſy tinklings lull the diſtant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The mopeing owl does to the moon complain
Of ſuch, as wand'ring near her ſecret bow'r,
Moleſt her ancient, ſolitary reign.

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ELEGIA, &c.

INGEMINAT ſignum occiduæ Campana diei;
Jam tardo per prata boum pede flectitur agmen,
Mugituſque ciet; veſtigia feſſus arator
Ægra domum trahit, et ſolus ſub nocte relinquor.

Jam rerum ſpecies evanida cedit, et omnis
Aura ſilet, niſi quà pigro Scarabæus in orbes
Murmure ſe volvat, niſi tintinnabula longè
Dent ſonitum, faciles pecori ſuadentia ſomnos;

Aut niſi ſola ſedens hederoſo in culmine Turris
Integret ad Lunam ferales Noctua cantus,
Viſa queri, propter ſecretos fortè receſſus
Si quis eat, turbetque antiqua et inhoſpita Regna.

Beneath thoſe rugged elms, that yew-tree's ſhade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet ſleep.

The breezy call of incenſe-breathing Morn,
The ſwallow twittering from the ſtraw-built ſhed,
The cock's ſhrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more ſhall rouſe them from their lowly bed:

For them no more the blazing hearth ſhall burn,
Or buſy houſewife ply her evening care;
No children run to liſp their ſire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiſs to ſhare.

Oft did the harveſt to their ſickle yield,
Their furrow oft the ſtubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their ſturdy ſtroke!

Let not ambition mock their uſeful toil,
Their homely joys, and deſtiny obſcure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a diſdainful ſmile,
The ſhort and ſimple annals of the poor.

Hìc ſubterque rudes ulmos, Taxique ſub umbrà
Quà ſuper ingeſtus crebro tumet aggere Ceſpes,
Æternùm poſuere anguſto in Carcere duri
Villarum Patrēs, et longa oblivia ducunt.

Non vox Auroræ croceos ſpirantis odores,
Non quæ ſtramineo de tegmine ſtridit Hirundo,
Non Galli tuba clara, neque hos reſonabile Cornu,
Ex humili poterunt iterum revocare cubili:

Non illis ſplendente foco renovabitur ignis,
Sedula nec curas urgebit veſpere Conjux;
Non Patris ad reditum tenero balbutiet ore
Certatimve amplexa genu petet Oſcula Proles.

Illis ſæpe ſeges maturà ceſſit Ariſtà,
Illi ſæpe graves fregerunt vomere glebas;
Ah! quoties læti ſub plauſtra egere Juvencos!
Ah! quoties duro nemora ingemuere ſub ictu!

Nec vitam, utilibus quæ incumbit provida curis,
Nec ſortem ignotam, neque ruſtica gaudia temnat
Ambitione tumens; nec honore ſuperbus avito
Annales Inopum quoſcunque audire recuſet.

The boaſt of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to Theſe the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er the Tomb no Trophies raiſe,
Where thro' the long-drawn iſle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem ſwells the note of praiſe.

Can floried urn or animated buſt
Back to its manſion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the ſilent duſt,
Or Flatt'ry ſooth the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected ſpot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celeſtial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have ſway'd,
Or wak'd to extaſy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the ſpoils of Time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repreſs'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the ſoul.

Sceptri grande decus, generoſæ ſtirpis honores,
Quicquid opes, aut forma dedit, commune Sepulchrum
Opprimit, et leti non evitabilis hora.
Ducit Laudis iter tantùm ad confinia Mortis.

Nec tamen ut culpà dignos urgete, ſuperbi,
Nulla quibus memori ſurgunt Inſignia Buſto,
Quà longos per Templi aditus, laqueataque tecta
Divinas iterare ſolent gravia Organa Laudes:

Inſcriptæne valent Urnæ, ſpirantiaque æra,
Ad ſedes fugientem animam revocare relictas?
Dicite, ſollicitet cineres ſi fama repoſtos?
Gloria ſi gelidas Fatorum mulceat Aures?

Forſitan hìc Animus neglectà in ſede quieſcat
Qui prius incaluit cœleſtis ſemine flammæ;
Forſitan hìc toleraſſe Manus quæ pondera noſſent
Imperii, magicumve lyrà elicuiſſe canorem.

Annales ſed nulla ſuos His Muſa recluſit,
Dives opum variarum, et longo fertilis ævo;
Pauperies anguſta ſacros compeſcuit ignes,
Et vivos animi glaciavit frigore curſus.

Full many a gem of pureſt ray ſerene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to bluſh unſeen,
And waſte its ſweetneſs on the deſert air.

Some village-HAMPDEN, that with dauntleſs breaſt
The little Tyrant of his fields withſtood;
Some mute inglorious MILTON here may reſt,
Some CROMWELL guiltleſs of his country's blood.

Th' applauſe of liſtening ſenates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to deſpiſe,
To ſcatter plenty o'er a ſmiling land,
And read their hiſtory in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbad: nor circumſcrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbad to wade through ſlaughter to a throne,
And ſhut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The ſtruggling pangs of conſcious truth to hide,
To quench the bluſhes of ingenuous ſhame,
Or heap the ſhrine of Luxury and Pride
With incenſe kindled at the Muſes flame.

Sæpe coruſcantes puro fulgore ſub antris
Abdidit Oceanus, cæcoque in gurgite gemmas;
Sæpe etiam flos, in ſolis qui naſcitur agris,
Neglectus rubet, inque auras diſperdit Odorem;

Hìc aliquis fortè HAMDENUS, qui pectore firmo
Obſtitit Imperio dominantis in arva Tyranni,
MILTONUS tumulo rudis atque inglorius illo
Dormiat, aut patrii CROMVELLUS ſanguinis inſons.

Eloquio attenti moderarier ora Senatùs,
Dura pati, ſævique minas ridere doloris,
Per patriam largos Fortunæ divitis imbres
Spargere, et in læto populi ſe agnoſcere vultu,

Hos ſua ſors vetuit; tenuique in Limite clauſit
Virtutes, ſceleriſque ſimul compeſcuit ortum;
Ad ſolium curſus per cædem urgere cruentos,
Atque tuas vetuit, Clementia, claudere portas,

Conatus premere occultos, quos conſcia Veri
Mens fovet, ingenuique extinguere ſigna pudoris,
Luxuriæve focos cumulare, Ædemque ſuperbam
Thure pio, quod Muſa ſuis accenderat aris.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble ſtrife,
Their ſober wiſhes never learn'd to ſtray;
Along the cool ſequeſter'd vale of life
They kept the noiſeleſs tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n theſe bones from inſult to protect
Some frail memorial ſtill erected nigh,
With uncouth rhimes and ſhapeleſs ſculpture deck'd,
Implores the paſſing tribute of a ſigh.

Their name, their years, ſpelt by th' unletter'd Muſe,
The place of fame and elegy ſupply:
And many a holy text around ſhe ſtrews,
That teach the ruſtic moraliſt to dye.

For who to dumb Forgetfulneſs a prey,
This pleaſing anxious being e'er reſign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the chearful day,
Nor caſt one longing lingering look behind?

On ſome fond breaſt the parting ſoul relies,
Some pious drops the cloſing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our Aſhes live their wonted Fires.

Infanæ procul amotis certamine turbæ
Sobria non illis didicerunt Vota vagari;
Securum vitæ per iter, vallemque reductam,
Servabant placidum, curfu fallente, tenorem.

His tamen incautus tumulis ne fortè Viator
Infultet, videas circum monimenta caduca,
Quà numeris incompofitis, rudibufque figuris
Offa tegit lapis, et fufpiria pofcit euntem.

Pro mœftis Elegis, culto pro carmine, fcribit
Quicquid Mufa poteft incondita, Nomen et Annos:
Multaque, queis animum moriens foletur Agreftis,
Dogmata difpergit facraï Scripturaï.

Sollicitæ quis enim, quis amatæ dulcia Vitæ,
Tædia, fuftinuit mutare filentibus umbris,
Deferuitve almæ confinia læta diei,
Nec Defiderio cunctantia Lumina flexit?

Projicit in gremium fefe moriturus amicum,
Deficienfque oculus lacrymas, pia munera, pofcit;
Quinetiam fida ex ipfo Natura Sepulchro
Exclamat, folitoque relucent igne favillæ.

For thee, who mindful of th' unohonour'd Dead
Doſt in theſe lines their artleſs tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred Spirit ſhall inquire thy fate,

Haply ſome hoary-headed Swain may ſay,
'Oft have we ſeen him at the peep of dawn
'Bruſhing with haſty ſteps the dews away
'To meet the ſun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
'That wreathes its old fantaſtick roots ſo high,
'His liſtleſs length at noon-tide wou'd he ſtretch,
'And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now ſmiling as in ſcorn,
'Muttering his wayward fancies he wou'd rove;
'Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
'Or craz'd with care, or croſs'd in hopeleſs love.

'One morn I miſs'd him on the cuſtom'd hill,
'Along the heath and near his favourite tree:
'Another came; nor yet beſide the rill,
'Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

At te, cui curæ tumulo ſine honore jacentes,
Incomptoque memor qui pingis agreſtia verſu;
Si quis erit, tua qui cognato pectore quondam
Fata roget, ſolà ſecum meditatus in umbrà,

Fortè aliqus memoret, canus jam Tempora Paſtor,
‘ Illum ſæpe novo Lucis conſpeximus ortu
‘ Verrentem propero matutinos pede Rores,
‘ Naſcenti ſuper arva jugoſa occurrere Soli.

‘ Illic antiquas ubi devia fagus in altum
‘ Radices agit, umbroſo ſub tegmine, lentus
‘ Solibus æſtivis, ſe effundere ſæpe ſolebat,
‘ Lumina fixa tenens, rivumque notare loquacem.

‘ Sæpe iſtam aſſuetus prope ſylvam errare, ſuperbum
‘ Ridens neſcio quid; nunc multa abnormia volvens,
‘ Aut deſperanti ſimilis, nunc pallidus ibat,
‘ Ut curà inſanus, miſerove agitatus Amore.

‘ Mane erat, et ſolito non illum in colle videbam,
‘ Non illum in campo, notà nec in arboris umbrà:
‘ Jamque dies novus ortus erat; neque flumina propter,
‘ Nec propter ſylvam, aut arvis erat ille jugoſis;

'The next with dirges due in ſad array
'Slow through the church-way path we ſaw him born,
'Approach and read (for thou can'ſt read) the lay,
'Grav'd on the ſtone beneath yon aged thorn.

The EPITAPH.

HERE reſts his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown,
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his ſoul ſincere,
Heaven did a recompence as largely ſend:
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wiſh'd) a friend.

No farther ſeek his merits to diſcloſe,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repoſe)
The boſom of his Father and his God.

THE END.

Tertius acceſſit, cùm portatum ordine mœſto
Vidimus, et triſtes, quà ſemita ducit ad Ædem,
Rite ire Exequias; ades huc, et perlege Carmen
(Nam potes,) inſcriptum lapidi ſub vepre vetuſto.

EPITAPHIUM.

HIC famæ jacet inſcius, nec hæres
Fortunæ Juvenis, ſuper ſilenti
Telluris gremio caput reponens.
Non cunas humiles, Laremve parvum
Contempſit pia Muſa; flebiliſque
Juſſit Melpomene ſuum vocari.

Huic largum fuit, integrumque pectus,
Et largum tulit a Deo favorem:
Solum quod potuit dare, indigenti
Indulſit lachrymam; Deuſque Amicum,
Quod ſolum petiit, dedit roganti.

Virtutes fuge curioſus ultra
Scrutari; fuge ſedibus tremendis
Culpas eruere, in Patris Deique
Illic mente ſacrà ſimul repoſtæ
Inter ſpemque metumque conquieſcunt.

FINIS.

MAR
1962
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